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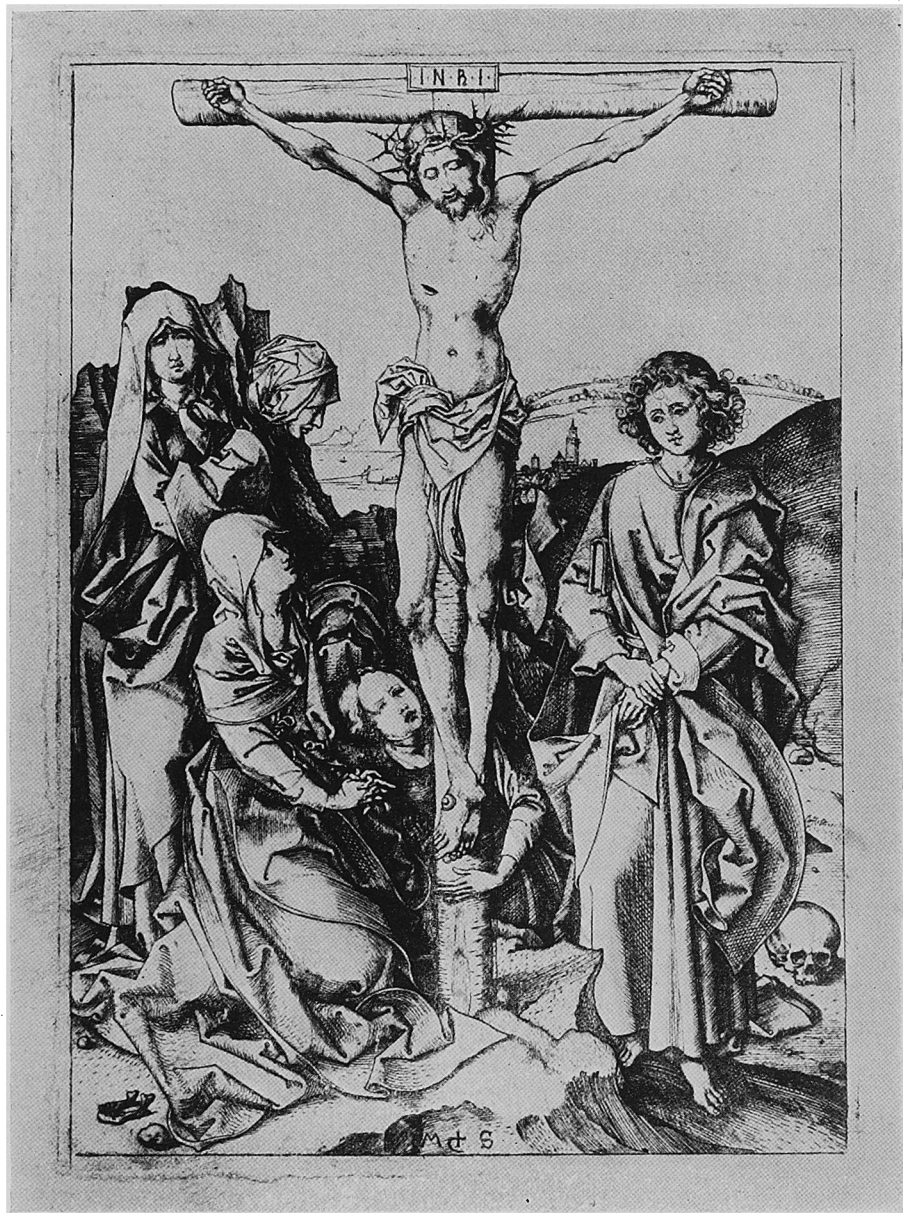
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THE CRUCIFIXION. BY MARTIN SCHONGAUER

# Mary, Mother

BY FITZROY CARRINGTON

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**M**ARY is standing at the foot of the Cross, looking upward at Christ crucified and dying. Through her mind there swiftly pass memories of the Nativity, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Adoration of the Magi, the Flight into Egypt, the Repose in Egypt, Christ among the Doctors, His leave-taking, and, as she swoons at the foot of the Cross, she seems again to hold her infant Son in her arms.

Anguish unspeakable and sickening pain  
Were thy first gifts to me, my little Son.  
My joy, my sorrow, pride and shame in one—  
(The Angel's message, was it not then vain?)  
The King of kings, my Babe, thou surely art,  
No other Babe was ever like thee,  
Sweet, on this pillow, let thy first sleep be,  
Or, if thou wake, draw life from near my heart.

[While thus I mused the Shepherds came,  
And called my little Son by name.]

Led by the Star we come  
Our infant King to greet,  
Here, humbly at his feet,  
We lay our honeycomb.  
Such presents as we bring  
Bespeak the life we lead,  
As o'er the pleasant mead  
We drive our flocks, or sing.  
Then let our voices ring  
With gladness and with praise,  
That in these happy days  
We find, at last, our King.  
Sweet Babe and Mother mild,  
In twofold reverence we  
Adore Maternity,  
Not less than him, the Child.

[Great was my wonder as I heard  
Them Hail him King, and own him Lord.]

They hailed him King! can they then know how rare,  
How beautiful, my precious Babe, you are?  
Well may their sweetest gifts the Shepherds bring  
To you, my Babe, my tender lamb, my King.

[My wonder grew, and grew my fear  
To see the Magi grave appear.]

This frankincense and myrrh,  
This gold and incense rare,  
From the far East we bear  
As tribute unto her  
Who how to us has given  
A King, to rule and bless,  
To bring us happiness,  
And show the way to Heaven.

[Their welcoming words my heart oppressed,  
I longed for solitude and rest.]

Intolerable honors! what have gold,  
Or frankincense, or myrrh, to do with thee,  
My little Son, who now so tenderly,  
So closely to my brimming heart I hold?

[The happy moments swiftly passed  
Till Joseph entered in hot haste.]

Away!  
We cannot linger and we cannot stay!  
Herod the tetrarch of a Star has heard,  
With his wise men conferred,  
And sends his soldiers our sweet Babe to slay!

[Swiftly I rose, my Babe close wrapped,  
And by a secret way escaped.]

O Joseph! whence shall we,  
This night, our journey take?  
Haste, for our Baby's sake!  
Haste, Joseph! we must flee!



THE ADORATION OF THE KINGS. BY MARTIN SCHONGAUER



THE NATIVITY. BY MARTIN SCHONGAUER

[Beneath the palm-tree's grateful shade  
I fain would rest—yet half afraid.]

Here let me rest; here, hidden from the heat,  
Let me await the setting of the sun.  
The silent night shall lull my little one—  
See how he sleeps!—was ever Babe so sweet?

[I watch for dawn, and as day breaks  
My Babe with sleep-soft cry awakes.]

My day dawns with him, and with dawn he cries.  
(O Joseph! I am weak with hungering!)  
See how he weeps!—I am too faint to sing—  
Hush, Baby mine, my kiss shall dry your eyes.

[Our journey draws toward its close,  
I long for Egypt and repose.]

O promised land of Egypt! when shall we,  
Safe in thy keeping, find, at last, a home?  
By weary ways, foreshortened with toil, we come,  
We ask but rest—rest for my babe and me.



As they journey, the date-palms, bent down by the  
small boy-angels, bow their heads, so that Mary and  
Joseph can gather the fruit. The Babe sees the angels  
(which are invisible to Mary and to Joseph) and,  
laughing, claps his little hands.

He laughs, my precious boy,  
And claps his hands—  
His rosy hands—with joy;  
He understands  
All that we say.

The palm-tree's clustered fruit  
He fain would touch.  
Nay, strain not overmuch,  
Such struggles do not suit  
Your happy play.

Sweet Babe, repose awhile  
On this my breast;  
Look up, my Babe, and smile,  
Then take your rest:  
O happy day!





THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT. BY MARTIN SCHONGAUER



[My husband, Joseph, fain would see  
Our Son, now twelve, more wise than he.]

He grows in grace; obedient, loving, kind,  
Thoughtful and wise—a rabbi he shall be.  
In knowledge of the Scriptures versed is he—  
A carpenter?—'t is little to my mind!

[I missed him, searched, but could not find,  
And thus to Joseph spoke my mind.]

He comes not when I call! Where can he be?  
Left he the shop upon some errand sent?  
When next I see him he shall sure repent  
His Mother's pain and her anxiety!

[I asked if they had seen him, and they say  
That to the Temple he has ta'en his way.]

The Temple, did you say? What does he there?  
Why with his parents stays he not at home?  
He has been acting strangely; much I fear,  
Unless I find him, harm to him may come.

[When Joseph speaks, my boy with us returns;  
My troubled heart with pride and sorrow burns.]

They tell me, Son, that you are growing wise  
In argument and knowledge of the Law.  
'Tis well—but bide at home. . . . Indeed, I saw  
Your many questions filled them with surprise.

[His words were wise, but yet I would not say  
How wise they seemed—I only begged him stay!]

Nay, tell me not again that you must be  
About your Father's business! Will you leave  
Your Mother, sorrowing?—Kiss me tenderly,  
Dear Son; stay yet awhile, nor make us grieve:

[Bitter the parting: he to manhood grown,  
Is gone, alas! and I am left, alone.]

Mother, forgive me, if I do not heed  
Your tears, your lamentations and your woe.  
To preach salvation to the world I go,  
His Word alone can save—and great the need.



MADONNA AND CHILD IN A COURTYARD. BY MARTIN SCHONGAUER

[Upon the Cross I gaze; my bitter cry  
Shall blast the ears of those who made him die!]

*"Father, forgive; they know not what they do."*  
He said, "forgive"—but must I pardon then  
Those who have killed my Son? O cruel men,  
You had not slain him thus if him you knew!

["Lo, it is finished;" see, he bows his head  
In token he is mine again, though dead.]

Death, be my friend! O Death, on thee I call!  
Delay not now thy coming, fain would I  
Join him, my Son, who said he should not die,  
Yet now is dead, and knows me not at all!

Death, be my friend! ease thou my bitter pain,  
Come as thou wilt, but come thou speedily!  
Kind Death, I feel thy fingers—now I die,  
And, dying, hold my little son again!

